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ABSTRACT

A speech in response to an individual's death is by nature a recurring form of rhetoric. Based on audience expectations and needs, certain generic aspects have emerged to characterize eulogies. The funeral oration has generally been recognized as a form of epideictic rhetoric. Modern scholars have generally broadly defined epideictic rhetoric to the point of including most forms of ceremonial speaking (Ryan, 1992). This paper seeks to apply K.H. Jamieson and K.K. Campbell's model of "rhetorical hybrids"--defined as fusions of the different rhetorical genres. This paper applies the concept of a rhetorical hybrid to incorporate three genres of rhetoric: eulogies, kategoria, and apologia. Specifically, the statements and actions surrounding the death of Princess Diana are examined; the statements of Queen Elizabeth II and the Earl of Spencer are analyzed. The larger frame of analysis can be called "eulogistic discourse." The paper concludes that both the Queen's statement and the Earl of Spencer's funeral oration represent functional rhetorical hybrids. (Contains nine references.) (Author/NKA)

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Diana's Eulogy: Breaking New Ground in Epideictic Rhetoric?

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A paper presented to the CSCA panel "Critical Responses to Freedom and Responsibility of Speech Issues Surrounding the Paparazzi and the Death of Princess Diana" at the Annual Central States Communication Association meeting in Chicago, Illinois, April 2-5, 1998.

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Abstract

A speech in response to individual death is by nature a recurring form of rhetoric. Based on audience expectations and needs, certain generic aspects have emerged to characterize eulogies. This paper seeks to apply Jamieson and Campbell's model of "rhetorical hybrids." Rhetoric hybrids are defined as fusions of the different rhetorical genres. This paper applies the concept of a rhetorical hybrid to incorporate three genres of rhetoric: eulogies, kategoria and apologia. Specifically, the statements and actions surrounding the death of Princess Diana will be examined. The statements of Queen Elizabeth II and the Earl of Spencer will be analyzed. This larger frame of analysis can be called"eulogistic discourse." The paper concludes that both the Queen's statement and the Earl of Spencer's funeral oration represent functional rhetorical hybrids.

Diana's Eulogy: Breaking New Ground in Epideictic Rhetoric?

Dating back to Pericles's funeral oration, the eulogy has been recognized as an enduring form of rhetoric. The funeral oration has generally been recognized as a form of epideitic rhetoric. Modern scholars have generally broadly defined epideitic rhetoric to the point of including most forms of ceremonial speaking (Ryan, 1992). A speech in response to individual death is by nature a recurring form of rhetoric. Based on audience expectations and needs, certain generic aspects have emerged to characterize eulogies.

Eulogies typically operate under generic constraints based on audience expectation. Brownlow and Davis (1974) identified two of major expectations: (1) express proper personal and audience grief; (2) to deepen appreciation and respect for the deceased. Eulogies, as a rhetorical form, "calls for ritualistic confirmation of the worth of the deceased" (p. 220). Jamieson (1978) identified five basic functions of eulogies based on audience need: (1) establishing the reality of death to a disbelieving audience; (2) help the audience deal with their own sense of mortality; (3)change the relationship between the living and the dead from present to past tense; (4) console the audience by arguing that the deceased "lives on" in some capacity; (5) reaffirm a sense of identity for the community.

Foss (1983) argues that offering advice to the audience could constitute a fifth function of eulogies. In this sense, eulogies can also serve a deliberative function of suggestion or exhortation. This observation is consistent with Jamieson and Campbell's (1982) discussion of

"rhetorical hybrids." Rhetoric hybrids are defined as fusions of the different rhetorical genres. Thus, the rhetorical genres identified by Aristotle: forensic, epideitic, and deliberative can overlap and combine in practice.

It is argued that hybrids "are important keys to understanding the coherence of complex rhetorical forms" (p. 136). Jamieson and Campbell argue that the incorporation of multiple genres can only be "functional" if they are subordinate to the primary functions and expectations of one genre. In terms of a eulogy, a "functional hybrid" will occur when it "can be viewed as a memorial to the life of the deceased, when they are compatible with positions advocated by the eulogist, whose motives must not appear self-serving, and when advocacy will not divide the audience or community" (p. 137-8).

This essay seeks to apply the concept of a rhetorical hybrid to incorporate three genres of rhetoric: eulogies, kategoria and apologia. Specifically, the statements and actions surrounding the death of Princess Diana will be examined. Thus, the genres of kategoria and apologia would need to be subordinate to the generic requirements of eulogies. Specifically, the statements of Queen Elizabeth II and the Earl of Spencer will be examined. This larger frame of analysis can be referred to as "eulogistic discourse" (Foss, 1983, p. 188).

Ryan (1982) stressed the use of kategoria and apologia as a speech set. Ryan felt that the two genres viewed together facilitate a better understanding of both the accusation and defense speeches. This perspective is also supported by Krause (1981) who argues that apologia must first be understood in terms of the situation that calls it forth. Thus, if apologetic statements are

made in self-defense, it follows that they must be provoked by external events. An informative application of Ryan's rhetorical model would seek to explain the motives and method behind the public statements about Diana's death and the external events that may have influenced it. The use of apologia dates from ancient Greece. The term "kategoria" was a noun signifying an accusation or charge. While the term "apologia" has been defined as a work that tries to explain or justify one's motives, convictions, or actions. Despite the acceptance and use of this genre as a means of analyzing rhetoric, the exact definition and boundaries of apologia and kategoria remain open to ambiguity.

Ryan (1982) contends there are two forms of kategoria/apologia; defense of policy or of character. Ryan justifies this broader interpretation on the basis of the etymology of the Greek words. The Greek noun "apologia" is defined broadly as "a speech in defense," and the Greek verb "apologeomai" includes a variety of defenses which were not limited to a defense of character.

This blend of genres is appropriate considering the unique circumstances surrounding Princess Diana's death. Princess Diana died in an automobile crash in Sportcentral Paris, on August 31, 1997. It has been alleged that on the evening of Diana's car crash, around 30 photographers had gathered outside the Ritz Hotel in Paris, where she was meeting her friend, Dodi Fayed. The Princess died when her car crashed into a wall, while it was followed by so-called paparazzi, photographers hoping to snatch pictures of famous people, on motorbikes. Her death generated media attention across the globe. In the years preceding her death,

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Princess Diana was involved in two major on-going controversies. These controversies were her on-going feud with the royal family and her relationship with the media.

Based on press reports, Diana's marriage to Prince Charles was troubled from the start. The crisis in their marriage was culminated by media confessions of adultery, which eventually resulted in a legal separation followed by a divorce. The split was perceived as being acrimonious with Princess Diana being deprived of the title, "Her Royal Highness." In addition there were reported differences between Charles and Diana concerning how the two royal princes should be raised.

The Princess had an ambivalent relationship with the media. Sometimes she complained about the media's intrusion, accusing photographers and making normal life impossible. Several times she appeared to be driven to tears as she was pursued by paparazzi. At other times, however, she seemed to crave the attention of the press. In the run-up to her divorce from Prince Charles, and in the years afterwards she sometimes fed information to journalists.

After Diana's death her brother, Earl Charles Spencer, accused journalists of having her "blood on their hands." The behavior of the press - which some viewed as causing Diana's death - also came under close scrutiny. Tabloid newspaper editors were banned from covering the funeral following objections from Lord Spencer. According to press accounts, he apparently said that he and his sisters -and specifically Diana - would not want them to be there.

Diana's death had a profound effect on the royal family. In the week before the funeral, the monarchy was widely criticized for being too distant from the British public at such an

important time. Diana had been stripped of the H.R.H. designation after her divorce from Prince Charles. Many in the public found it petty then and after her death it was seen as yet another proof of her ill-treatment by the Royal Family. The House of Windsor's relationship with the British public suffered after its perceived silence in the days following Diana's death. The silence was seen as a snub against a princess the people loved and mourned. Buckingham Palace also had to deny a report that Prince Charles fought fiercely with his mother to ensure that Diana was given a fitting public funeral.

The Earl of Spencer's Funeral Oration

In the week of mourning, preceding the funeral, hundreds of thousands of people stood in queues for up to 12 hours to sign books of condolence. On the day of her funeral, a million people lined the streets of London to watch the gun carriage carry Diana's body from her home at Kensington Palace to Westminster Abbey for the funeral service.

The Earl of Spencer felt that his funeral oration at Westminster Abbey was a pivotal moment in his life. "I reclaimed myself in that speech." After his speech, he was applauded loudly by the congregation in the Abbey, and the crowd outside to whom the service was being relayed on loudspeakers. The Earl of Spencer's speech adhered to the generic requirements of a eulogy, while incorporating aspects of the kategoria genre. Thus, basically fulfilling the requirement of a "functional hybrid."

The Earl expressed appropriate personal and audience grief. "I stand before you today the representative of a family in grief, in a country in mourning, before a world in shock...tens

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of millions of people taking part in this service all over the world via television and radio whoever actually met her, feel that they too lost someone close to them in the early hours of Sunday morning."

The Earl spent significant parts of his speech to deepen appreciation and respect for the deceased.

> **Diana was the very essence of compassion, of duty, of style, of beauty. All over the world she was a symbol of selfless humanity. All over the world, a standard bearer for the rights of the truly downtrodden...But your greatest gift was your intuition and it was a gift you used wisely. This is what underpinned all your other wonderful attributes and if we look to analyze what it was about you that had such a wide appeal we find it in your instinctive feel for what was really important in all our lives.**

The Earl of Spencer tried to establish the reality of death to a disbelieving audience.

> **Today is our chance to say thank you for the way you brightened our lives, even though God granted you but half a life. We will all feel cheated always that you were taken from us so young and yet we must learn to be grateful that you came along at all. Only now that you are gone do we truly appreciate what we are now without and we want you to know that life without you is very, very difficult.**

The Earl sought to change the relationship between the living and the dead from present to past tense. "We have all despaired at our loss over the past week and only the strength of the

message you gave us through your years of giving has afforded us the strength to move forward."

The Earl tried to console the audience by arguing that the deceased "lives on" in everyone's memory.

> **Above all we give thanks for the life of a woman I am so proud to be able to call my sister, the unique, the complex, the extraordinary and irreplaceable Diana whose beauty, both internal and external, will never be extinguished from our minds**.

The Earl reaffirmed a sense of identity for the community by reminding the audience that Diana was "a very British girl who transcended nationality."

It should be noted that the Earl of Spencer's speech did not make any reference to religion or spirituality. This tends to be a common referent to help the audience deal with their own sense of mortality. However, the Earl was just one of many speakers during the funeral. The Archbishop of Cantabury was one of speakers before the Earl's funeral oration.

The Earl of Spencer, while adhering to the generic requirements of eulogies, also incorporated elements of kategoria. The Earl of Spencer, while making a powerful tribute to his sister, also attacked the media and made poignant comments about the Royal Family, indirectly criticizing them for their attitude to his sister.

The Earl maintained his composure through most of his tribute to Diana. But, there was an edge to his voice as he made some barbed comments about the media and paparazzi. "Genuine goodness is threatening to those at the opposite end of the moral spectrum," he said.

"She talked endlessly of getting away from England, mainly because of the treatment that she received at the hand of the newspapers," he continued. "I don't think she ever understood why her genuinely good intentions were sneered at by the media, why there appeared to be a permanent quest on their behalf to bring her down. It is baffling," he said. The Earl said the irony of her life was that she had been named after the goddess of hunting, but she herself was one of the most hunted individuals."

After the speech, there were calls for new privacy laws restricting media coverage of individuals. The Labour MP Roger Stott, a member of the Commons National Heritage Select Committee, said his committee should now hold an inquiry into whether there should be new privacy laws. Roger Gale, vice-chairman of the Conservative backbench media committee, described the deaths as "the ultimate result of press intrusion."

Supermarket chains began removing issues carrying articles and photos of Diana's love life from the checkout aisles. Leading U.S. grocer Kroger Co.,ordered a company-wide ban on any upcoming tabloids that feature pictures of the late Princess at the scene of the fatal car crash. Even the tabloids decided to censor themselves. *The National Enquirer*, *The Globe* and *The Star* stated they would not run pictures of the crash scene.

The Earl also criticized the Royal Family. He said that as the last year had demonstrated, she did not need the trappings of royalty to win the hearts of the world. "She needed no Royal title to generate her particular brand of magic," he said, referring to the withdrawal of the title, "Her Royal Highness." He pledged that he and what he called her "blood

family" would look after the welfare of her sons. "She would want us today to pledge ourselves to protecting her beloved boys, William and Harry, from a similar fate - and I do this here, Diana, Earl Spencer vow to on your behalf," he said, protect the Royal princes.

> **We will not allow them to suffer the anguish that used regularly to drive you to tearful despair. And, beyond that, on behalf of your mother and sisters, I pledge that we, your blood family will do all we can to continue the imaginative, loving way in which you were steering these two exceptional young men, so that their souls are not simply immersed by duty and tradition but can sing openly as you planned.**

After the speech, faced with growing demands to restore Diana's royal title -- Her Royal Highness -- Buckingham Palace revealed that the Queen had made that offer, but was rebuffed by Diana's family, the Spencers. The Palace said that following the funeral, the Queen offered to restore the honor, but was told the Spencers felt Diana wouldn't have wanted it. British constitutional historian Lord Blake told the BBC such a move would have been without precedent.

The Queen's Statement

An interesting aspect of a death of a controversial figure is the rhetorical problem it places on their perceived opponents. In the afterglow of death, the feelings and interests of the deceased are sanctified. While the opponents of the deceased are put on the defensive. For example, after President Kennedy's assassination, Barry Goldwater received hundreds of poison-pen letters and hate letters, as though he was personally responsible for killing Kennedy.

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"Are you happy now?" asked one letter (White, 1965).

The night before the service, the Queen, with the crowds outside Buckingham Palace clearly in view behind her, made an unprecedented live broadcast to the nation. The speech took place after much public criticism regarding the relationship between the royal family and Princess Diana. Though the speech adheres to the generic requirements of an eulogy, a strong sub-text of apologia can be seen as well. Diana, by her death, found her position and viewpoints sanctified by the British public. Thus, the royal family was very much on the defensive. It is in this context, that the Queen, dressed in somber mourning garb, paid a warm tribute to the late Princess.

The Queen expressed proper personal and audience grief.

Since last Sunday's dreadful news we have seen, throughout Britain and around the world, an overwhelming expression of sadness at Diana's death. We have all been trying in our different ways to cope. It is not easy to express a sense of loss, since the initial shock is often succeeded by a mixture of other feelings: disbelief, incomprehension, anger -- and concern for those who remain.

Here the Queen is seeking identification with her audience in terms of shared grief.

The Queen expressed appreciation and respect for the deceased.

First, I want to pay tribute to Diana myself. She was an exceptional and gifted human being. In good times and bad, she never lost her capacity to smile and laugh, nor to inspire others with her warmth and kindness. I admired and

respected her -- for her energy and commitment to others, and especially for her devotion to her two boys.

Her compliment about Diana's parental skills, presents at least a public concession regarding Diana's determination to raise the princes in a 'normal' environment.

The Queen tried to establish the reality of death by acknowledging the sense of loss. "This week at Balmoral, we have all been trying to help William and Harry come to terms with the devastating loss that they and the rest of us have suffered."

The Queen consoled the audience by arguing that the deceased memory will linger.

No one who knew Diana will ever forget her. Millions of others who never met her, but felt they knew her, will remember her. I for one believe that there are lessons to be drawn from her life and from the extraordinary and moving reaction to her death. I share in your determination to cherish her memory.

Lastly, the Queen reaffirmed a sense of identity for the community by expressing the hope of unity for the nation. "I hope that tomorrow we can all, wherever we are, join in expressing our grief at Diana's loss, and gratitude for her all-too-short life. It is a chance to show to the whole world the British nation united in grief and respect."

Given the perception of a feud between Diana and the royal family, the Queen felt it appropriate to attempt to establish her sincerity and ethos. "We have all felt those emotions in these last few days. So what I say to you now,as your queen and as a grandmother, I say from my heart."

Several months later, on her golden wedding anniversary, the Queen promised to listen to public opinion and to adapt the Royal Family to the needs of the public in the future. In a visit to South Africa, The Prince of Wales praised the charity work of his former wife, and her efforts to publicize the campaign to ban landmines.

Both the Queen's statement and the Earl of Spencer's funeral oration represent functional hybrids. The Earl successfully met the generic constraints and expectations of an eulogy. He was also successful in making charges against the media and the royal family. These charges led to at least short term changes in the behavior of media and the royal family. The Queen, by making a public statement praising Diana, successfully met the generic expectations of epideitic rhetoric. In context, her remarks, to at least some degree, represent an apologia to the Spencer family and to the British public.

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